

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 153444 TOSEC 050011

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 153444 TOSEC 050011

FOL REPEAT OF PEKING 1198 TO SECSTATE INFO HONG KONG TAIPEI
TOKYO CINCPAC JUN 27

QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1198

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: G.P. LI MEETING WITH CHOU EN-LAI

1. U.S. PROFESSOR CHEN PIEN LI MET WITH PRC PREMIER
CHOU EN-LAI YESTERDAY. NCNA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A
YEAR DID NOT SAY THE MEETING TOOK PLACE "IN THE HOSPITAL"
AND PEOPLE'S DAILY UNDERSCORED THE POINT OF CHOU'S
IMPROVED HEALTH BY SHOWING HIM STANDING WITH PROFESSOR
LI OUTSIDE A CHINESE-STYLE HOUSE RATHER THAN INSIDE.

2. ACCORDING TO DR. LI, WHO CALLED ON MR. BUSH THIS
MORNING, THE THIRTY MINUTE MEETING WAS MOSTLY TAKEN UP
WITH SOCIAL CHITCHAT, INCLUDING A LONG DISCUSSION OF FRUIT.
CHOU PROVED TO BE SOMEWHAT OF AN AUTHORITY ON DISTRIBUTION OF
FRUIT IN THE UNITED STATES AND PRESENTED LI WITH LYCHEES TO
TAKE BACK WITH HIM. THE MEETING OCCURRED IN A "VILLA BESIDE
A LAKE IN THE HEART OF PEKING", PRESUMABLY IN CHUNGNANHAI,
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PAGE 02 STATE 153444 TOSEC 050011

ALTHOUGH LI SEEMED RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF CHOU'S

HEALTH HE CHARACTERIZED IT AS "GOOD" AND SAID HE
DETECTED NO HAND TREMORS OR FALTERING SPEECH.

3. LI MET ON JUNE 25 WITH VICE FOREIGN MINISTER WANG HAI-JUNG
AND CAME AWAY MORE IMPRESSED WITH HER ABILITIES THAN MOST
OTHER OBSERVERS. LI, WHO CARRIED ON THE CONVERSATIONS IN
MANDARIN, DESCRIBED WANG AS "VERY BRIGHT, ABLE, AND
SELF-ASSURED." WANG, TANG WEN-SHENG, AND MFA PROTOCOL
CHIEF CHU CHUAN-HSIEN ALSO TOOK PART IN THE MEETING WITH
CHOU.

4. LI HAS ALSO TALKED WITH OTHER OFFICIALS HERE AND MADE THE
OBSERVATION TO US THAT LOWER LEVEL OFFICIALS IN PEKING ARE
MORE RIGID IN THEIR THINKING AND MORE STRONGLY AGAINST THE
US THAN THE HIGHER OFFICIALS.

5. COMMENT: LI, A RETIRED NIH EMPLOYEE, CAME TO CHINA

WITH DR. J. WEI-PING LOH OF GARY, INDIANA, TO VISIT
RELATIVES AND PROMOTE MEDICAL EXCHANGES. HHE ALSO SEES
HIMSELF AS SOMETHING OF A MIDDLE-MAN TO PROMOTE FRIENDSHIP
BETWEEN THE U.S. AND CHINA. HE MET MAO TSE-TUNG DURING
HIS 1973 VISIT ON THE BASIS OF A STUDENT FRIENDSHIP WITH MAO
FROM CHANGSHA DAYS. HE DOES NOT EXPECT TO MEET MAO THIS
TIME BUT THE MEETING WITH CHOU MAKES CLEAR HE HAS
CONTINUED ACCESS TO THE TOP PRC LEADERSHIP. BUSH
UNQTE INGERSOLL

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